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ABSTRACT

A variety of techniques can help a teacher create the atmosphere of a "quality circle," a Japanese management method in which each member of a group shares and contributes to the learning experience. "Creating a Commercial" allows students to create original oratory for presentation to the class. In "The Good News First," students improve their oral skills by presenting a speech on a variety of topics. In "Listen My Children" students develop listening skills by listening and responding to poetry. In "Eula's Eulogy," students sharpen their public speaking skills by writing and delivering speeches eulogizing themselves. "A Pigment of Your Imagination" uses malapropisms to improve speech technique and listening awareness. In "Tune in Again Next Week..." students improve listening skills through presentation of an audience participation story. Finally, students develop listening skills while literally spinning a yarn. (JL)

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SUPER TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHERS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
For the Requirements of EGC 6606

by

Michael K. Foley

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

What's in the mind of an English teacher? Really! Consider for a moment the vast reservoir of memory reserved for their knowledge of the English language. Many English teachers have forgotten as much about the spoken and written language as some people learn in a lifetime. But what they remember is even greater. Because English teachers are the keepers of the Mother Tongue. They are the true historians; the memory of the explorers and adventurers is familiar to them. The English teachers are not only the true historians, but they are also the futurists of the language because they inspire the writers and speakers of the next generation.

An English teacher begins with a philosophy of life which is applied in the teaching model. My philosophy is that the student is important. It might be stated that the subject (English) is for the student, not the student for the subject. I believe that the student is in my class for no accidental reason. On the contrary, the encounter we are to have is more meaningful if thought to be consequential. We are there to improve each other's life.

The Japanese have shown the rest of the world that their management techniques are very effective. One of their classic operations has for its basis the "Quality Circle." This is a

group of people who brainstorm and share with each other the best of what each person's experience can contribute. When this process is utilized in the classroom the success of the endeavor is predictably high.

The Quality Circle in a school might begin with a single teacher reaching out to a single student. It might grow as small groups are formed within a class. Perhaps it would climax in the interpersonal communications of students, teachers, administrators and parents.

There is a small verse which says it better than I can, because it speaks to the partnership of teacher and learner. It also gives the responsibility of the human awareness to the senior partner. See if the gladness and warmth described might not be essential to the decor of your environment.

If I Had Known

If I had known what trouble you were bearing;
What griefs were in the silence of your face;
I would have been more gentle, and more caring,
And tried to give you gladness for a space.
I would have brought more warmth into the place,
If I had known.

If I had known what thoughts despairing drew you;
(Why do we never try to understand?)
I would have lent a little friendship to you,
And slipped my hand within your hand,
And made your stay more pleasant in the land,
If I had known.

Mary Carolyn Davies

Let me share with you some ideas for experiences which

can be used in the class setting. Utilizing the teachers as a facilitator will enrich these activities and serve to nurture the relationship so necessary to a satisfactory experience. Permit me to share with you the motto which I have adopted this year: "Do not force and push the students, but force them to push themselves."

SECTION II

TECHNIQUES

Creating a Commercial

TIME: Five minutes (each production)

SIZE: Individual or small groups

PURPOSE: To allow students to create original oratory
through making a commercial for presentation to
a class

PROCEDURE

Allow the student or group of students to plan, write, act in, and produce a television commercial. The name of the product should be original to avoid copyright violations. Costumes and product models will be needed. The teacher may wish to contact the media specialist for lighting and video-taping equipment for special effects and recording.

Follow-up: After the commercials have been produced, play them back to the class for the students to see themselves on the television set.

The Good News First

TIME: Several class periods

SIZE: Individual

PURPOSE: To improve students' oral skills

PROCEDURE

Sometimes students can be very creative. Here is their chance to prove what they can do. These topics, by their tone, will demand unusual concentration, development, and presentation. Students should be encouraged to develop a speech to be delivered under the prescribed circumstances of each topic. The classroom might be formally arranged with a podium or special speaker's table before the speeches are given. The teacher should encourage the speakers to be creative in their approaches while striving to retain attitudes appropriate to the topics.

Topics:

1. Speech given to kamikaze pilots before a crucial mission during WWII
2. Speech upon acceptance of Nobel Prize for discovery of elixir of life (keep people alive forever)
3. Keynote speech at World Health Association proposing first cancer cure
4. Governor's television address to Californians on the imminent failure of the San Andreas Fault
5. Explaining to the President and his cabinet the ramifications of creating the first human clone

Listen, My Children

TIME: One class period

SIZE: Class

PURPOSE: To develop listening skills

PROCEDURE

Poetry may be used as a device to sharpen listening skills, convey feelings and emotions, determine word meaning using context clues, and recognize main ideas. Read the single-line poem quotations, one at a time, to the class. Ask the students to say (write) what mood or tone the poem may take, judging from the line that was given. The reasons for their choices may be keyed to a single word or a combination of words. Ask them to note the word(s), and the connotations therein. After trying the single-line quotes, students can expand the skills mentioned above by applying their curiosity to the stanzas quoted. Next, have the students identify the poem's mood, theme or message (if any), and figures of speech by listening to each one being read.

Quoted lines:

"Go, your lover lives!" said Cromwell. "Curfew shall not ring tonight!"

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold."

"Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night sailed off in a wooden shoe--"

"There's a quaint little place they call Lullaby Town."

"I have a rendezvous with death."

"We called him 'Rags.' He was just a cur."

"Much have I travelled in the realms of gold."

"O world, I cannot hold thee close enough."

"The sun was shining on the sea, shining with all his might."

"How dear to my heart are the scenes of childhood."

"This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle."

"Something there is that doesn't love a wall."

"The mountain and the squirrel had a quarrel."

"I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me."

"I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky."

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.
(Thomas Moore - "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms")

Life has loveliness to sell,
All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.
(Sara Teasdale - "Barter")

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends-
It gives a lovely light!
(Edna St. Vincent Millay - "Figs from Thistles")

This be the verse you grave for me:
 Here he lies where he longed to be;
 Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
 And the hunter home from the hill.
 (Robert Louis Stevenson - "Requiem")

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
 The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
 The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
 And the highwayman came riding-
 Riding-riding-
 The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.
 (Alfred Noyes - "The Highwayman")

Up from the South, at break of day,
 Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
 The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
 Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door.
 The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
 Telling the battle was on once more,
 And Sheridan twenty miles away.
 (Thomas Buchanan Read - "Sheridan's Ride")

Eula's Eulogy

TIME: Two class periods

SIZE: Individual

PURPOSE: To sharpen public speaking skills

PROCEDURE

This exercise gives students another chance to develop the basic speaking skills. Review the importance and function of eye contact, poise, voice and gesticulation. Tell the class the meaning of the word eulogy (a speech given in praise of someone), or have them use the dictionary for reference. Then have students write and deliver a speech eulogizing themselves (two to four minutes).

A Pigment of your Imagination

TIME: One to several class periods

SIZE: Individual

PURPOSE: To improve speech technique and listening awareness
through malapropisms

PROCEDURE

Malapropisms are fun. Students at any secondary school level will enjoy creating their own. The idea comes from the character, Mrs. Malaprop, in an English play, The Rivals. Mrs. Malaprop frequently used words that sounded similar to the ones intended, but were incorrect. Contemporary "characters" like Norm Crosby, Archie Bunker, or Charlie, the television character who does the news on Hee Haw, are famous for their humorous malapropisms.

The sample below is a mixture of double-talk, nonsense words and malapropisms. It is patterned after the Hee Haw news segment.

Copy the example for your class, and let them find the malapropisms. Then ask them to write a segment which they can read to the class. The class will find that malapropisms are as much fun to listen to as they are to say.

EXAMPLE

"Good evening, television viewers. Most of us have heard of the terrible things going on in Okalawa, Nipamissy. One cadaster after another. It bobbles the exaggeration and makes one wonder if, indeed, there are any orders in the universe.

First, you may recall, Okalawa was struck by three--did you say three?--natural cadasters caused by depression in the whether or not to vote Republic in the prime electric. This left a wake of people in the mourning who were hapless and homely and left to their own descriptions.

Furthermore, it became necessary for the governor to call out the right guard and reclaim partial law. Just when things were getting back to normal, a plane caring for over two hundred passages crashed into the local penitentiary and came to rest smack in the middle of solitary refinement. Pandemonium broke loose. So did fifteen other inmates. It was a week or so before the escapades were rounded up and order was restored.

But that was not the end of trouble for Okalawa. The Chief of Release was caught with his hand on the tilt and fired on the spot. He was temporarily replaced by the local pathologist who was just dying to get the job.

I wish I could say that that episode brought to a contusion the trouble in Okalawa, but I have just been handed an announcer saying that ten minutes ago, Okalawa dissipated from the face of the earth. That's right--dissipated from the face of the earth. It seems that Professor Icon Dewitt at the Okalawa Technical Institute had been experimenting with radial active articles. He was giving a lecture on ice and dopes when a blinding flasher occurred

Well, we will certainly keep a closed watch in Okalawa to keep you mortified of any new turnips there. But now to the natural news---

Tune in Again Next Week....

TIME: One class period

SIZE: Entire class

PURPOSE: To improve listening skills through presentation
of an audience participation story

PROCEDURE

Group students according to the sounds they will make for the story. A short rehearsal of sounds is recommended beforehand. As the story is read, pauses for sound may become less pronounced as the technique becomes more familiar.

Here is a list of the sounds you may use for each underlined part:

C.B. (Roll 'em)
King Kong (Beat chest)
Mars (The Red Planet)
Rocket (Shhhh...) .
Dudley Doright (Never fear, Dudley's here)
Drums (Drum)
Samantha Scream (Save me, Save me)
Natives (Kong, kong,....)
Footprints (Stomping)
Gorilla (Scratching)
Mad (Growl)
R. C. Mounted Police (Horses)
Tarzan (Ahhahh...)
Weapons (Bang, bang,.....)

SAMPLE STORY

Once upon a time there was a movie director named Cecil B. Demillion. C. B. decided to make a movie entitled King Kong on Mars. As the story opens, a rocket has crash landed on Mars. Our hero, Dudley Doright, has just emerged from the rocket declaring that all is well. Suddenly, drums are heard in the distance. Dudley Doright wonders about this and asks his lovely copilot, Samantha Scream, to investigate. No sooner is Samantha out of sight than the drums are heard again. Sensing an ominous foreboding, Dudley Doright himself decides to investigate. Following the tracks of Samantha Scream, he comes to a village on Mars where he hears the chanting of natives. The chanting stops suddenly as the moons of Mars are blotted. Then footprints are heard and grow louder. As the moons reappear, they reveal an enormous gorilla towering over everything. The gorilla gets mad and grabs Samantha Scream. Dudley Doright asks the natives to summon help with their drums. Moments later the Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrive. They try unsuccessfully to stop Kong with their weapons.

The huge gorilla continues to carry away our heroine, lovely Samantha Scream. The natives continue to beat their drums. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police continue to fire their weapons, but to no avail. Then the air is shattered by a new sound. All action is suspended.

The sound that is heard is the rescue cry of none other than Tarzan. Swinging on a vine, Tarzan snatches Samantha Scream from the clutches of King Kong. The gorilla gets mad. The natives run for cover. But Dudley Doright and Samantha Scream are already in their rocket heading away from Mars.

Tune in again next week for the continuing saga of Samantha Scream, episode #2 entitled: "Railroad Rescue."

Communication Yarn (String-Fishing Line)

TIME: One class period

SIZE: Five or six to a group

PURPOSE: To develop listening skills

PROCEDURE

Give a ball of yarn (1/3 skein) to one person in each group. Only the person with the ball of yarn may talk. Each group is given a controversial topic. The person holding the yarn expresses an opinion. Any member of the group wishing to agree or disagree must gesture for the yarn. The first speaker holds the loose end of the yarn and passes the ball. Subsequent speakers also hang on to the yarn, but pass the ball. After several have spoken, a network begins to form. After the discussion reaches a natural conclusion, the yarn pattern will reveal the "speakers" and the "listeners" of the group. This technique may be repeated for regrouping or a change of topic.

SECTION III
CONCLUSION

Well, sharing the activities has been fun for me. Perhaps they have stirred some of those fine teaching activities which were dormant in your mind. Good! That was the whole idea.

But now it is time to conclude - to wind down a bit so that the focus will not be lost. To do this I have chosen the Roberta Flack Exercise. Would you then, please

Roberta Flack Exercise

Everybody, be absolutely still.

Close your eyes.

Tell yourself you can never, never open them again.

Think of some things you will never look at anymore.

Think of some things you would give anything to see again.

But you can't, you can't.

Now everybody, very slowly open up your eyes.

No sounds.

Take a deep breath.

Feel what it means to really be here, alive.

Look into the face of the person next to you.

Feel what it means for both of you to be here now.

Smile into the face of this other person, and while you are smiling, think of all the hang-ups you can't get rid of-the ridiculous, petty grievances-the calamities you can't possibly climb on to of-

Realize now how little they really matter.

Take another deep breath; let it out; breathe; let it out; breathe; let it out.

Walk quietly around the room, making friends with everybody.

(Play Theme from Spock's Mediation-Star Trek Movie: Revenge of the Khan)

SECTION IV
MULTI-MEDIA PRESENTATION EQUIPMENT

Stereo cassette tape player with speakers

Tape (cassette)

1. Theme 2001: A Space Odyssey
2. Theme Superman: The movie
3. Theme
4. Theme Spock's Mediation - Star Trek: Revenge of
the Khan

Mimeographed sheets (60 per technique)

Yarn (one skein rolled into a ball)

Odds and ends (one shopping bag of sundry items)

Movie (8mm) projector

Movie screen

Calligraphy set (Schaefer)

Books

1. Best Loved Poems of the American People
2. The New Century Composition Rhetoric
3. The Stories of Ray Bradbury